Pitching Yourself

The most powerful two-sentences you'll ever spend two months on.

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Learning Objectives

After this presentation, you should be able to:
- define what a pitch is and identify its key components
- implement strategies for increasing interest in your pitch
- actually make a pitch

Review

Huh... maybe this would have been a useful slide in my last presentation...

- Know your audience
  - The words you use will shift based on who is listening
- Set your goals
  - Be targeted and to the point
- Be clear and concise
  - Data-density and laser-like focus
- Use feedback to refine
  - Your communication is a device: troubleshoot it.

Professors

Grads in Other Departments — Peers — Grads in Other Departments

Undergrads

Basics of a Pitch

<u>A brief argument for why someone should want to hear more</u>.
- Formats:
  - (context) + Hook + Conflict + Cliffhanger
  - It's like X, but with Y
- Expandable:
  - 10-30 seconds; 1-5 minutes; full discussion
  - But also: for peers, colleagues, superiors, underlings
- Useful for:
  - Unexpected opportunities
  - Introductions
  - Interviews
  - Branding

"I've got an elevator pitch, an escalator pitch, and, just to be safe, a stairway pitch."

Hooks: Engendering Interest

- Personability
- Investment
- Conflict
- Motion
- The Strange Attractor
- Humor
- Likeability
  - Competency
  - Sympathy
  - Proactive

Writing Exercise: Pitching a Shutout Game

I guess instead of a baseball reference I could have gone with cricket...

Pre-Write
- Context:
  - Audience specific – if you use jargon, will the listener still understand?
- Emotions:
  - How do you want the listener to feel in order to be motivated in the right way?
  - What information and wording will promote that feeling?

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Writing Exercise: Pitching a Shutout Game

It's never a good thing when it can't all fit on one slide...

- Hook:
  - Example -- Personability and Passion: What gets you excited?
    - Why do you care about it?
    - What does someone else need to know to care about it the same way?
- Conflict:
  - Where is the threat?
  - The limitations of what we need to know?
  - The structure being upended?
- Cliffhanger:
  - What will cause the listener to ask to hear more?
  - Don't hold back: give answers that raise questions, instead of questions you don't answer.

Testing Your Pitch

You mean we have to talk? With people?! Who can hear us!?!

- Turn to a partner and share.
  - 1 minute to give your pitch
  - 2-4 for feedback
  - Switch

Listeners:
  - Does the pitch get your interest right away?
  - What emotion is it trying to create?
  - Do you feel like you know the person (or their abilities) a little more?
  - What is the call to action? What does the pitcher ultimately want to do?

Questions?

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